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CONFERENCE
OF
REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTIAN LEADERS
OF KOREA

SEOUL

DECEMBER 28-29, 1925

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CONFERENCE
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REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTIAN LEADERS
OF
KOREA

On the invitation of Dr. John R. Mott, Chairman of the International Missionary Council, sixty Korean Christian leaders and missionaries met at the Chosen Hotel, Seoul, Korea, for a conference on December twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth. Hon. T. H. Yun as chairman of the conference introduced Dr. Mott.

Dr. Mott in his first address to the conference stated that the International Missionary Council contemplated holding a world missionary conference in the year 1927 or 1928. In view of the changes which have occurred since the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 and in view of the present world situation and the developments which have taken place in the meantime within the Christian Church, this seems to be desirable. It should be remembered that the International Missionary Council unites the Protestant missionary societies of Christendom and the National Christian Councils and similar bodies of China, Japan, India and other mission fields. It is a non-legislative body for the study of problems of world evangelization and for cooperative effort in lines which may be mutually agreed upon.

Dr. Mott's visit to the various mission fields at this time is to ascertain whether such a conference should be held, and if held, what should be its scope, what questions should be considered, what representation there should be, and what preparations should be made for it. The gathering in Seoul was to discover the thought of representative Korean Christian leaders and missionaries regarding the proposed conference and the several questions connected therewith.

Mr. Fletcher S. Brockman accompanied Dr. Mott on this visit. With Dr. Mott were also Mrs. Mott, his son Frederick and his secretary Mr. E. C. Brelsford.

The three addresses given by Dr. Mott and that of Mr. Fletcher Brockman brought an enlarged world vision and a deepening of the spiritual life to members of the conference.

SUBJECTS OF DISCUSSION.

In response to Dr. Mott's question,

"What problems confront you in Korea on which you would like to have brought to bear the experience of the Christian World?"

an open forum was held in which both Korean leaders and missionaries took part. The delegates were then divided into four groups and assigned subjects for consideration in separate meetings as follows :

- I. Attitude of the Korean Youth Today toward Christ, His Church and His Program.
- II. Reappraisal of the Christian Enterprise in Korea.
- III. The Spiritual Dynamic.
- VI. The Proposed Meeting of the International Missionary Council and the Relation of Korea Thereto.

FINDINGS OF THE GROUP MEETINGS.

The following findings were adopted by the conference :

- I. *Group on Attitude of the Korean Youth Today toward Christ, His Church and His Program.*

In the minds of those in closest touch with the rising generation in Korea today there is little doubt that there is a spirit of unrest which in part is manifesting itself in an attitude of antagonism to the church and criticism of the existing religious order. This attitude is in evidence among the student class and the unemployed, especially in the larger cities in which in a few instances it has become outspoken. The unfriendly spirit toward the Church gives no evidence of serious antagonism to Christ or to His program.

The source of this unrest can be traced in part to influences from Russia and to the literature which is in circulation among the students. This literature consists of newspapers, pamphlets and magazines printed not only in Korea

but more especially in Japan which are frequently critical of the church and of religion in general. Even among those sympathetic to the church there is a feeling that the program of the church should be enlarged, its educational program rendered more practical, and its ministry made more effective to meet the intellectual and spiritual needs of the younger generation and to lead them in their legitimate aspirations. The main source of discontent and complaint, however, not only against the church but against government and authority and the existing social order is found in the present economic situation in Korea which is rendering it increasingly difficult for the Korean people to acquire a livelihood.

In view of these facts it is our opinion that the situation demands greater exertion in winning our young people and in maintaining sympathetic personal touch with them. We feel also that there is need of more strenuous effort in reaching the non-Christian students, and that to this end our Christian young people should be thoroughly prepared intellectually and spiritually for a leadership which shall command the respect and confidence of the rising generation whose minds have been confused by the sudden transition of Korea from the ancient order of life to the complex conditions of modern civilization with the concomitant doubts and perplexities of a materialistic education. An urgent call should be sent out to our Christian young men and women to devote their lives to consecrated and unselfish service in seeking to confront the youth of Korea with Christ in whom they may have the abundant life of joy and peace.

Under the discussion of the findings of Group I, Bishop Welch offered the following resolution which was adopted :

"Resolved that we request the Federal Council of Churches and Missions to arrange for the preparation and publication of a series of non-controversial, cheap and popular pamphlets and periodicals treating from the Christian standpoint some of the social problems and the intellectual difficulties which confront the young people of Korea today."

II. *Group on the Reappraisal of the Christian Enterprise in Korea.*

In its forty years of work in Korea, the Protestant Christian enterprise has made great progress and has been a stimulus to Christian effort in other parts of the world. We give God praise for this ; He has wonderfully used His servants, missionary and Korean, to accomplish this end. A Church with a large number of adherents and with marked Christian vitality has arisen.

Conditions of living, political and economic, have changed ; the thought life of the Korean people has been greatly modified ; new problems and difficulties as well as new opportunities confront the Church today. The Christian Church needs once again to study carefully its task in order to measure what has already been accomplished, to ascertain the trend of present progress and to determine what readjustments are demanded to meet the new day.

Our group discussion has shown the need of study along the following lines :—

- A. We need not only a statistical study as to the number of churches, preachers, teachers, schools, students and adherents but also a more vital knowledge of such problems as the present condition of the Christian church and the Christians, and the extent to which the Christian spirit really permeates the church, the community and the individual life.
- B. The earlier pioneer work of the missionaries in Korea has been of inestimable value but it is obvious that methods which were adequate and effective in former days are not adapted to the present time. Some of the missionaries are not adjusting themselves to the changed educational status of the people and more especially to the leaders among the Koreans. An alienation of feeling has resulted between some fellow-workers, foreign and Korean, as a result of the methods followed by some missionaries and by their attitude toward the Korean

people and the Korean church. Careful study, mutually appreciative of the problem of the relation of the missionaries and the Korean leaders and the Korean church is urgently needed.

- C. The Korean Church has largely adopted methods of church work that were developed in other countries under widely differing conditions. There is a feeling on the part of the Korean leaders that the methods of church work should be studied with a view to ascertaining whether they are adapted to present conditions and as to what modifications or adjustments are necessary. The particular problem at present, for example, is how the church can render a larger service to the community in the present economic condition of the people.
- D. The Korean church today faces a real need of more trained leaders who have been educated in the best schools, and are capable of influencing the multitude of young men and women who are being instructed in the schools of Korea today. The problem of the development of leaders, men and women, is urgent and needs careful study.
- E. In the earlier days of missionary work the church schools were the best schools in the land and admission to them was eagerly sought. Their students, whether from Christian or from non-Christian families, were influenced by Christianity. Today even the children from Christian homes desire to go to the better equipped and more efficient government schools. The church in Korea cannot afford to neglect Christian education for the very serious reason that the influence of the non-Christian schools is for the most part counter to Christianity. The Korean church needs to restudy carefully her educational task.

In view of these findings the group unanimously voted the following: "It is the consensus of opinion in this group that a comprehensive survey of Christian activities and Christian progress in Korea should be made

in the near future with a view of making the necessary readjustments in methods and policies."

Although our Federal Council of Churches and Missions possesses neither the name nor the powers of corresponding bodies in other lands, it is desirable that this Council shall receive full recognition as our central body for consultation and cooperation. Yet since we should also insure that the recommendations of this unofficial yet really representative meeting should not fail
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED.

1. That we respectfully suggest to the Federal Council of Churches and Missions, and to its constituent bodies, such slight changes in its name, basis of representation and powers as shall make it a more generally satisfactory organ of the Christian forces of the country.
2. That we recommend that the proposed survey be made under the auspices of the Council and through a special committee to be appointed by it.
3. That, in order to carry out this recommendation, a committee of nine be appointed by this meeting, to present this matter to the Council and to its constituent bodies for their approval, and, in case the Council fails to act, that this committee be instructed to proceed with the survey.

III. Group on the Spiritual Dynamic.

It is clear that Jesus Christ expected the work of proclaiming His Gospel and establishing His Kingdom to be done under the guidance and through the power of the Holy Spirit. The promises of Christ and the experiences of Christians in all ages past also give us assurance that the spiritual dynamic is at all times abundantly available. We believe that the greatest need in Korea today is the release of this spiritual power through human personalities. The teachings of the Bible, however, and the experience of the Church convince us that each marked manifestation of the power of

the Holy Spirit in human lives has come at the cost of definite surrender and prayer.

It must be acknowledged that there are conditions in the visible church of Christ in Korea at the present time which call for the serious consideration of Christian leaders. There is indifference on the part of many in regard to family worship, Sabbath observance, private prayer and Bible study, personal work and attendance upon public worship and Bible institutes. There is ■ shifting of interest on the part of many of the young people as evidenced by their absence from Sunday School and Bible study classes and by their questioning of all moral standards. There is manifest especially among the young people a discouragement which in many cases amounts to despair. In comparison with the conditions of ten or fifteen years ago the present may be looked upon as a time of spiritual uncertainties in the church in Korea.

On the other hand, there are conditions which afford cause for thanksgiving. Many of the leaders of the Church, and also unofficial church members, are deeply concerned over the present situation and are praying earnestly for a spiritual awakening. Special seasons of prayer are being held among groups of workers; the spiritual life of Korean preachers is deepening in piety and power with the result that they are delivering a more earnest spiritual message; the organized Christian churches are becoming more firmly established in faith and good works; the Sunday School has had a marked growth in numbers and in efficiency; Christian workers are receiving more thorough training in Bible Schools and Seminaries. Perhaps the most significant fact to be noted is the real heart hunger among Christians for a spiritual awakening and a yearning among the non-Christians for spiritual light and life. In the midst of discouragement the people are groping after higher things which they recognize as eternal and imperishable.

We make the following suggestions as to the means which may be used to bring about ■ spiritual awakening in Korea;

- A. That missionaries and Korean pastors in their messages insist upon the necessity of individual spiritual regeneration, and that a manifest new birth be made a condition of membership in the Church.
- B. That Christian workers, both missionaries and Koreans, give themselves to earnest prayer as individuals and in groups, such as the formal "retreats", that all may be equipped with divine power for the delicate and difficult tasks that confront the Church at this time.
- C. That more thorough and adequate provision be made for the training of Christian workers in Bible Schools and in Seminaries and that special prayer be offered that teachers and students in these schools may show forth the Living Christ.
- D. That special prayer be offered that one or more leaders may arise who shall be able to show the way to the Korean Church and the Korean people.
- E. That greater emphasis be placed upon religious education in the work of the church in Korea and that more serious attention be given to the spiritual life of the students both in our Christian schools and in government institutions.
- F. That Christian Churches in other lands be requested to set apart a day of special prayer for the Korean Church and the Korean people.
- G. That the assistance of Christians in other lands be sought in order to provide a more abundant and varied Christian literature.
- H. That request be made of spirit-filled evangelists from other nations to visit Korea for the purpose of holding special meetings for the deepening of the spiritual life of missionaries and Korean workers.

IV. Group on the Proposed Meeting of the International Missionary Council and the Relation of Korea Thereto.

In view of the large benefits to be expected from a new consideration of the problems and opportunities of this day ; by a widely representative body of Christian leaders ; in view of the position now occupied and probably to be occupied in an increasing degree by the International Missionary Council as a central organization for Christian conference and cooperation ; and in view further of the fact that Korea is not at present represented in this body, and that for its own sake and for the sake of the contribution which it may make to the world-wide Christian enterprise, it ought to be represented in such councils ; we heartily approve the holding of the enlarged session of the International Missionary Council in the near future ; we recommend the participation of Korea therein ; we endorse the proposal to hold this meeting in Jerusalem.

While Korea is a comparatively small and compact country, with a relatively simple ecclesiastical situation ; yet the unusual growth and strength of the Protestant Christian Churches in this country, the distinctive nature of the missionary methods adopted, and the spirit of extension which has already placed Korea among the "sending nations," seem to us to justify the request that Korea be represented in the proposed world conference by not less than nine delegates, of whom a majority shall be Koreans.

We concur in the request made by Group No. 2 that the Federal Council of Churches and Missions change its constitution, and recommend that this Council be asked to name the delegates to the proposed International Missionary Council or on its decision, that this Council determine the method by which such delegates be selected.

It is understood that the matter of financing the expenses of delegates to the International Missionary Council will be considered after the proposals of the International Missionary

Council regarding this and other matters are received following its meeting next July.

Committee on Survey.

The committee provided for in the report of Group was appointed by the chairman as follows :

W. A. Noble	Choi Heung Chong
Han Suk Chin	Miss Helen Kim
Im Taik Kwan	Yi Seung Kui
Hon. Yun Tchi Ho	H. Miller
J. L. Gerdine	

The preparation and distribution of a report of the proceedings of this conference was referred to this committee.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS.

On behalf of the delegates, Mrs. K. K. Lee and Miss Helen Kim presented Dr. and Mrs. Mott with two silver dishes as a token of affection and esteem.



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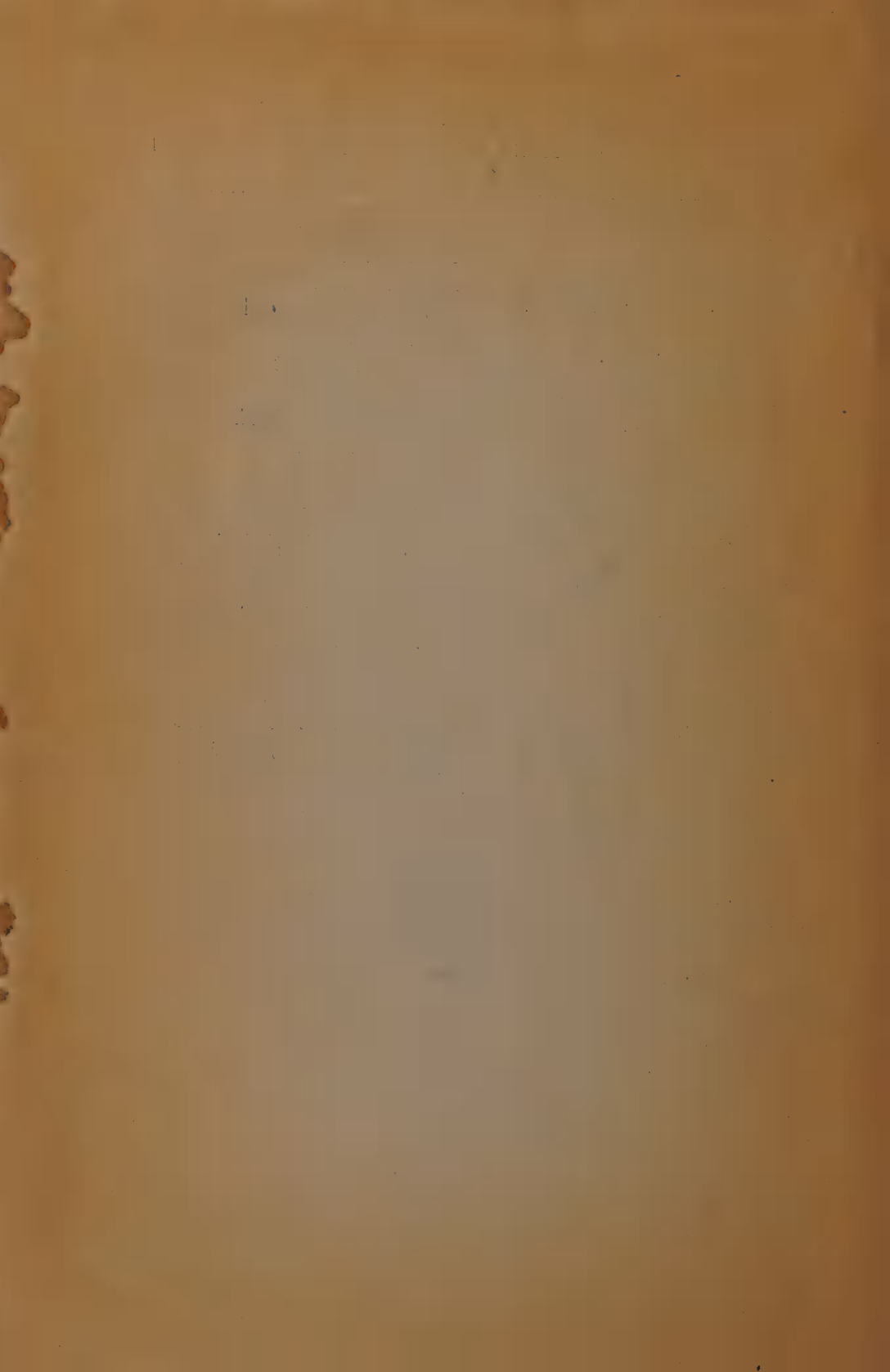
LIST OF DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE

^{Kim} Miss Ai Heui	Rev. Kim Usoun
Rev. G. Anderson	Mr. J. O. Koo
Miss A. R. Appenzeller	Mrs. K. K. Lee
Rev. A. L. Becker	Rev. D. A. McDonald
Rev. B. W. Billings	Mr. Hugh Miller
Rev. H. E. Blair	Rev. S. A. Moffett
Mr. L. I. Bowers	Rev. J. Z. Moore
Mr. F. M. Brockman	Rev. Namkoong Hyuk
Rev. Cha Chai Myung	Rev. W. A. Noble
Rev. Choi Heung Chong	Dr. K. S. Oh
Mr. Choi Timothy	Rev. Oh Wha Yung
Rev. W. M. Clark	Lieut. Com. W. Palstra
Rev. J. C. Crane	Miss H. E. Pollard
Rev. J. Y. Crothers	Rev. Pyen Sung Ok
Mr. Hugh H. Cynn	Mr. J. B. Reynolds
Miss L. Edwards	Rev. H. A. Rhodes
Rev. J. S. Gale	Rev. J. S. Ryang
Rev. F. K. Gamble	Mr. M. L. Swinehart
Rev. J. L. Gerdine	The Rt. Rev. M. N. Trollope
Mrs. R. S. Hall, M. D.	J. D. VanBuskirk, M. D.
Rev. Han Suck Chin	Rev. A. W. Wasson
Rev. J. G. Holdcroft	Bishop H. Welch
Mr. Hong Pyeng Sun	Mr. H. F. L. Woods
Rev. Im Tak Kwon	Rev. Yi Cha Ik
Rev. Jang Kyu Myung	Rev. Yi Ik Mo
Rev. Kil Sun Choo	Mr. Yi Sang Chai
Miss Helen Kim	Mr. Yi Seung Hoon
Mrs. Milissa Kim	Mr. Yi Soon Ki
Mrs. Kim Sung Mo	Prof. Yu Uck Kyum
Mr. Kim Tong Won	Hon. T. H. Yun
Prof. Kim Tuk Su	Miss Helen Yun

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